A

MEMORIAL DISCOURSE

ON THE

HON. JOHN NESBITT CONYNGHAM, LL.D.,

DELIVERED IN

ST. STEPHEN'S CHURCH, WILKES BARRE,

On Thursday, the 20th of April, 1871,

BY

WM. BACON STEVENS, D. D., LL.D.,

BISHOP OF THE DIOCESE OF PENNSYLVANA.

PHILADELPHIA:
M'CALLA & STAVELY, PRINTERS, 237-'9 DOCK STREET.
1871.

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PUBLISHED BY REQUEST OF THE VESTRY.

DISCOURSE.

BY THE GRACE OF GOD I AM WHAT I AM. 1 Cor. xv., v. 10.
THEY GLORIFIED GOD IN ME. Gal. i., v. 24.

These two verses embody two great principles; one respects personal character, the other the manifestation of that character to the world. When St. Paul, after speaking of himself as the least of the Apostles, and not meet to be called an Apostle, because he persecuted the Church of God, adds, "but, by the grace of God I am what I am," he recognizes the fact of his high position as an Apostle, and that it was all due to the grace of God; that in truth his character was the result of the working in his soul of Divine Grace.

Again, when he tells the Galatians of his wonderful conversion and of the effects of that change upon the Churches which were in Judea, rejoicing as they did that the Persecutor of Christians had become a Preacher of the faith which once he destroyed, he adds the significant words, "and they glorified God in

me," *i. e.*, they gave thanks and praise for what God had wrought through Paul's instrumentality, recognized it as God's work done through him, thus making his deeds redound to God's glory. Thus are we taught that Christian character is the work of God's grace, and that it is our duty to glorify God for all such exhibitions of Christian character as exalt that grace. It is with this spirit and with this purpose that I stand before you this day. I am to speak of an exalted Christian character, and show that it was a character fashioned by the grace of God, and I shall call upon you not to glorify the person who bore this character, but God, by whose grace it was moulded, and to whose glory it should be made tributary. It is not to magnify the man as if he was self-made, self-sustained, self-elevated, but it is to magnify the grace of God, which made Judge Conyngham what he was, and to tell the living that all true and noble life is the work of God's grace, and all glory belongs, not to the human instrument, but to the Divine Being who made it to show forth His praise.

When we stand with delighted gaze before some exquisitely chiselled statue, or within some grand Cathedral, we may praise the beauty of the one, and admire the majesty of the other; we may pause before the statue to trace out its lines of grace; and feast our eyes in the Cathedral upon its vaulted arches, its clustering columns, its storied windows; but who and what do we praise? Do we praise the marble, as if it had carved itself out of the rough block; or the wood and the stone of the Cathedral, as if they had hewn themselves out of the forest and the quarry, and built up themselves into the grandeur which attracts our gaze? No! It is the Sculptor and the Architect whom we praise, the mind which devised, the directing, controlling intellect. This is what we glorify, and not the mere instruments and materials which the Artist employs. Just so it is here, while we gaze at the beautifully sculptured life and the noble temple of character which were manifested by our departed friend, let us, through these, show God's wonder-working grace, and make our praise of the human instrument redound to the glory of the Almighty.

Filled with these thoughts, I proceed to comply with a request of the Vestry of this Church to deliver a memorial discourse upon the character of Judge Conyngham: a character deserving the highest eulogy, and from a study of which we may learn many lessons, whereby our own lives may be shaped into higher and holier development.

Yet, I feel peculiarly embarrassed in standing before you on this occasion. There seems to be almost a conflict between my official duty and my private relations. My personal connection with the honored dead, causes me to shrink from publicly speaking of him, as I feel that he deserves, while my official position seems to make it clear that the ecclesiastical head of this Diocese should record his deliberate judgment of one of the chief Laymen within his jurisdiction, who for nearly half a century was actively associated with "the outward business of the House of God."

And here, let me state that I do not propose to give you a biography of our dear friend: such a life-sketch, however desirable, cannot

now be drawn. My aim is to portray his character as moulded by the grace of God, enlightened by the Holy Ghost, and vitalized by faith in the Lord Jesus.

The facts which make up the personal history of Judge Conyngham are few and simple. The lives of some men are full of stirring incident, shifting scenes, critical epochs, and the narrator is led on from one excitement to another, from one sudden change to another, until the story of life is as full of romance as the skilfully laid plot of a novel. The lives of others are more quiet, less changeful, move in a narrower circle, and yet are productive of as much good, and bless the world with more healthful influences than the former.

The still, deep river that flows almost noiselessly, because deep, and that goes quietly on its way from its mountain cradle to its ocean grave, is more useful in all the arts of industry and commerce, and adds more to the wealth and comfort of a people, than the broader river, broken into rapids and cascades, more attractive to the eye, making more noise, calling out more

romantic sentiment, but yet not available for trade and commerce.

The life of Judge Conyngham, while not devoid of striking incidents, is not made up of incidents. His life is rather the growth of great principles, and its beauty consists in the harmonious development of these principles, so as to form a noble and symmetrical whole.

Born in the City of Philadelphia in 1798, he received his education there, and graduated with high honor at the University of Pennsylvania in 1816.

Selecting the Law for his profession, he was entered as a student in the office of the Hon. Joseph R. Ingersoll, and was Mr. Ingersoll's second student, the late Judge Petit being the first.

Having completed his preparatory sudies in a manner which secured to him the life-long affection and respect of his honored Preceptor, he was admitted to the Bar, and entered with high hopes upon his Profession. Of an ardent and sanguine temperament, he was unwilling to wait the slow process of rising to eminence

in his native city at a time when the Bar was lustrous with some of its brightest legal light, and so he resolved to establish himself in Wilkes Barre, in the Wyoming Valley.

At the time (1820) when Judge Conyngham first came here, the inhabitants were only a few hundred, but still it was the centre of influence, social and civil, for all Northern Pennsylvania.

The poet Campbell, by his "Gertrude of Wyoming," has made the Valley almost classic ground, and though the scenes which he describes are not always true to nature, he has yet caused the name of "fair Wyoming" "on Susquehanna's tide" to be a household word, wherever the poems of the author of "The Pleasures of Hope" are known and admired.

When he left Philadelphia for Wilkes Barre, there were among his fellow passengers, in those long three days' ride in the stage, two persons with whom afterwards he became peculiarly associated. One, was a young law student of about his own age, returning home full of life and spirit, who afterwards was admitted to the Luzerne Bar, then studied for the ministry, and

rose steadily, until Samuel Bowman became the Assistant Bishop of Pennsylvania. The other person, was a young lady, the grand-daughter of the old Revolutionary Hero, Colonel Butler, and who, a few years after, became his wife; with whom he lived in the happiest of domestic relations for nearly half a century, and of whom it is enough to say in words of Scripture, "Her children rise up and call her blessed."

Thus the young Lawyer made for himself a home in this, then, almost frontier town, and settled himself to solid study and hard work in his profession. At that time his figure was tall but spare, his face ruddy and finely chiselled, his manners easy and graceful, and his whole bearing full of that unselfish kindness which is so magnetic in drawing to itself the love and confidence of all who come within the area of its attraction.

Having thus set him before you, standing in the stadium, and ready to start in the life-race for the goal of wealth and honor, I shall pursue the history of his daily life no longer in detail, but group together what I have further

to say of him under several points comprehending his life as a Citizen, as a Judge, as a Christian, and as a Churchman, thus presenting the several phases of his many-sided character, and thus enabling us the better to comprehend and admire the whole.

As a Citizen he performed with honesty every duty which was laid upon him. Taking with alacrity his part in every needed work or sacrifice, and doing all that he could to keep healthful and sound, that public opinion which is the breath of life to the nation. In all the questions which have agitated this Commonwealth, or this land, for the last fifty years, he has taken his decided stand, always on what he conscientiously believed to be the side of truth and right; and never has there been known an instance when he compromised a single principle of truth and right in the advocacy of his views or plans. Hence, though in early years interested in State and National politics, and holding sharply and clearly his distinctive opinions, he was respected by all parties, and secured the confidence even of his opponents. When for a year or two he

was a member of the State Legislature, his course there was high-toned and incorruptible, and he stood prominently forth at a time of no little excitement, as a Legislator, who could neither be bribed nor frightened, but who dared to do his duty, despite blandishment or threats. "A friend who was in the Legislature with him years ago, spoke of his undeviating courtesy and urbanity, and of his inflexible integrity as well as ability." This information, says Judge Agnew, of the Supreme Bench, who relates the fact, coming from an opponent in politics to Judge Conyngham, made a most favourable impression on my mind, which has never ceased to increase, as future opportunity furnished me better means of knowledge."

In all matters of public improvement, in all matters of Education, in all matters of social advancement, in all matters of charity and benevolence, in all matters connected with the suppression of vice and the promoting of temperance, in all matters relating to societies and libraries for intellectual advancement, in all matters connected with the pushing forward of

public improvement, for the developing of the resources of the State, and disemboweling and utilizing its mineral wealth—in all these, and other kindred things, Judge Conyngham took an active and often foremost part. He was one of the recognized and accredited leaders of public thought and public action. Careful to scrutinize and weigh well every measure projected, yet when satisfied of its propriety, he threw himself into it and pressed it, if possible, to a successful issue.

Particularly was his high bearing as a Patriot conspicuous during the late civil war.

Holding political opinions differing on many points from those promulgated by the Administration, he yet sacrificed every party feeling, and addressed himself with special vigor to the preservation of the Union. He joined in calls for public meetings, he addressed immense audiences, he headed subscription lists, he stimulated the lagging, he encouraged enlistment, and, unable to go himself, he gave all his four sons to his country, two of whom bled in its battles, and all of whom would have died if need

had been, in its defence. His name and influence were all powerful in his judicial district, and few men gave greater personal or moral support to our cause in its hour of peril, than this large-hearted and broad-minded man.

Thus did he prove a worthy son of one partner, and a worthy namesake of the other, of that old mercantile firm, "Conyngham & Nesbitt," which in the darkest period of the Revolution in 1780, and when Washington was apprehensive that he could not keep the field with his impoverished and distressed army, nobly came forward and supplied the needed means, to the great relief of Washington, who, with Robert Morris, the financier, gratefully acknowledged their obligations for their generous aid.

As a Judge, the character of our departed Friend has been portrayed by his Brethren on the Bench and at the Bar, in the tribute that was paid to him last Summer, on the occasion of his resigning his President Judgeship. You all remember that occasion. The whole Bar of Luzerne County, as one man, rose up to do him

honour. With a unanimity never before seen, the legal profession gathered to the Banquet given in his honour, and subscribed to the elegant testimonial presented to him as the lasting evidences of their personal and official regards. It is not often that such a tribute is paid to a Judge. It was the first instance of the kind in Pennsylvania. But it was an instance so marked in its leading characteristics, that it will ever stand out as a remarkable tribute of genuine affection to official worth. No less than sixteen Judges, from the Supreme Court of the United States down through all our state Judiciaries, gave in writing their deliberate judgment of his character as a Judge. One speaks of him "as the noble gentleman and the eminent jurist," who has "long and so ably maintained the dignity of his office and the purity of the ermine;" another as "a profound lawyer, a learned and upright Judge;" another speaks of his "unwearied and incessant labour, his perfect conscientiousness and impartiality, his world-wide learning and unexcelled ability;" another writes of him, "To the solid attainments and

sound judgment of a disciplined lawyer, he united the strong sense of Justice and the inflexible uprightness of an impartial Judge;" another says, "To unsuspected purity of purpose he has joined the greatest fidelity and the most eminent legal learning and ability;" another writes, "There is no man living for whom I have a greater veneration and respect than Judge Conyngham. By his retirement the Judiciary of the State loses one of its brightest ornaments;" and another says, "His learning, and industry, and purity of character made him a model Judge." Let it be remembered that this was what was said of him while living, by Judges with whom in various relations he had been associated, and who knew and had tested his value, by all the legal standards which could compute worth or measure greatness.

It is the character of Judge Conyngham drawn by Judges, men who had risen above the rivalries and jealousies of their profession, and with unprejudiced minds, spoke out their true thoughts:—and thus, like a portrait painted by the hands of many masters, where one draws a

feature, another delineates an expression, another pencils the outline, another lights up the eye, and another puts on the warm colouring that makes the canvas glow as with real life and health; so here, the several Judges have each furnished a feature, or an expression, or an attitude, to make up the full-length portrait of a Judicial character, which will, doubtless, for a long time to come, be pointed to, and held up to future admiration, as that of a model Judge.

While it does not become me to go into any discussion of the principles which regulated the discharge of his official duties, there is one aspect connected with his position on the Bench, which I cannot pass over without notice. I allude to the fact that from the Bench, and as a Judge, and during the whole period of presiding there, he was incessant in teaching and moulding the public mind in the hundred ethical as well as legal points which came before him. In his charges to juries, in his decisions on questions of law, in his protecting the rights of witnesses, in his strict upholding of all the forms and processes of law, in his sentences to the condemned,

in his maintenance of the full amenities of the Bar, in the spotlessness of his own private as well as public character, he was constantly instructing the people—line upon line, precept upon precept—reaching men whom the pulpit could not reach, instilling principles with the noislessness, yet effectiveness of the dew, shaping opinion by the insensible processes which ever emanate from the upright bench, and thus he was ever wisely governing and teaching the people, educating them, all unconscious to themselves, to discharge the high duties, and responsibilities which devolved upon them in all the phases and conditions of civil, social, and domestic life.

Thus far we have looked at our friend in his merely natural gifts and character, as a good Citizen, a sound Lawyer, a wise Judge;—qualities and traits which have their worldly glare and worth, and which may exist without the renewing grace of God, changing and sanctifying the heart.

We come now to the record of that change, and to consider the Christian life which was the result.

To the eye of the Moralist, there was nothing in the character of the Judge that needed change. Devoid of gross vices, free from mean ones, acting on the highest principles of human rectitude with a sense of honor which recoiled from everything base or ungentlemanly, and with moral instincts trained to the nicest discriminations of conduct and duty, he seemed to need nothing more.

To the eye of the Formalist, there was nothing in the condition of the Judge which seemed to require change. Brought up from childhood in old Christ Church in Philadelphia, trained in youth to the service of the Prayer Book, he was proverbially observant of all the outward duties of religion, and constant in his attendance on Divine Worship. No one paid greater outward respect to the Ordinances of the Sanctuary, to the Ministry, and to the Liturgy, or in proportion to his means, gave more liberally for the sustaining of the Church.

But, though for a season he seemed to rest satisfied with his high toned morality and strict decorum in the public worship, yet he was led

gradually to see that he was building on the sand and not on the rock. Two human agencies were used by God to teach him his error and lead him into the truth, viz.: failing health and faithful preaching.

Excessive devotion to business soon told upon his strength, and he was laid aside for nearly a year with loss of voice and threatened disease of the lungs. A large part of this time he was confined to his house. He had just reached the point for which he had been long striving, to stand in the forefront of the Bar of Northern Pennsylvania, when his bright hopes seemed blighted, and he was appointed to sickness, to silence, and to a patient waiting upon God. Shut out from active duties, he turned his thoughts inward. The good seed of the word which had been so faithfully sowed in St. Stephen's Parish, by its former Rector, the Rev. Dr. May, began to spring up under the earnest preaching of his successor, the Rev. Dr. Claxton.

The change which took place in Judge Conyngham's mind was not one of those sudden and marked cases that sharply and forever graved

upon the memory, the day and place of conversion; but it was rather the gradual yielding of the heart to the convictions of truth and the appeals of the Gospel, until he was ready to take his decided stand, as a Christian, and boldly confess Christ as his only Saviour before God, Angels, and men.

Under the ministry of the Rev. R. Bethell Claxton, D. D., he received the rite of Confirmation in St. Stephen's Church, in 1841, at the hands of Bishop U. H. Onderdonk, and henceforward he daily proceeded in all virtue and godliness of living. He had learned in the school of Christ, that morality, the most exalted, if it spring from worldly motives, had in it no power to atone for sin or reconcile to God; that morality was no Saviour, and could secure from God no salvation; and looking at his own works in the light of Divine truth, he saw their defectiveness and their worthlessness, and hence he renounced them as a ground of trust or merit, and looked solely to the atoning blood and the perfect righteousness of the Lord Jesus as the only ground of pardon and justification, hope and peace.

He had learned also, in that same school of Christ, that formalism, the mere outward conformity of the lips and body to the ceremonials of religion, was of no avail where the inner life of faith was absent; that outward observances of rubrics and ritual were not things on which to rest our hopes for eternity.

There is a Christian Phariseeism as well as Jewish. A tithing of anise and mint and cummin, while yet there is a neglect of the weightier matters of the law—a making clean the outside of the cup and platter, while within they are full of extortion and excess.

To nothing is the human heart more prone than this substitution of outward forms, for inward grace; this attempt to cheat the conscience into peace by rigid ceremonialism, while there is no union of the soul with Christ by a living faith. Men are easily imposed on by this delusion, because so many of them want to have it so. It is so much easier to bow the body than to bow the heart; to make outward reverences than to cultivate inward repentance; to give time and money, and service, than to renounce

the world, the flesh, and the devil; to build up before the heart a beautiful façade of ceremonial piety, faultless to the eye of men, while at the same time the heart behind this garnished outside, is but a whited sepulchre, in which, as God looks, he sees it full of all uncleanness. It is one of the most successful deceits of the Adversary of our souls, to make men believe that external devotion to the Church is true religion, and thus keep them from genuine repentance of sin, and true faith in the Lord Jesus, and a life hid with Christ in God.

Judge Conyngham, while he was strict in all outward observances of the Church, did not regard them as any basis of merit, but, as the natural outgrowth of love to the great Head of the Church, just as the devotion of a child to a parent is the efflorescence of filial love seeking these outward signs of reverence, to give it form and expression. From the day that he formally united with St. Stephen's Church, he devoted himself to whatever service he could do for Christ's sake. His piety at once became active. He established fami-

ly prayer in his household. He took part in the Sunday-School. He engaged in the prayer meeting service. He became a member of several benevolent institutions. He aided in founding the Tract Society and the Bible Society, of both of which he was President at his death. He did not put the candle of his profession under a bushel, but on the candlestick of a high consecration, that it might give light to all within the circle of his influence.

He was never ashamed of his religion. While he made no ostentatious display of piety, and was with characteristic modesty, rather retiring than obtruding in his religious views, yet he never shrunk from the full and open confession of Christ, and wherever he went, men took knowledge of him, that he had been with Jesus and had learned of Him. There was no equivocation about his piety, no timidity in its maintenance, no restiveness under it as if it were a burden. His religion was not a garment made for home wear, to be put off when he went on the circuit and on the bench. It was not a robe to be worn on Sundays and in Churches, but to

lay aside on journeys and in Court-houses. It was not paroxysmal and spasmodic, furbished up for Communion and Lenten seasons, and neglected at other times. It was, on the contrary, the daily dress of his mind and heart, worn always, and always worn with the same carefulness to keep it unstained, whether he was at home, in the street, at the bar, on the bench, or within the house of God.

The uniformity of his piety was one of its marked features. It had no seasons of backsliding and then seasons of reviving; it had not its winters of icy coldness, and its summers of burning heat; it had not its Bochims, deep valleys of tears, and its Pisgahs, tall mountain tops that opened before him the heavenly Canaan. It was rather a calm, continuous, but steadily ascending path, having indeed its undulations, its occasional turnings to the right and to the left, its shadows now and then, and its rain drops of repentance, but on the whole was fitly represented by the Bible metaphor, which says the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

This it was that gave him that calm happiness which so characterized his Christian life. It was a cheerful, beaming piety. There was no moroseness or sombreness about it. His heart was attuned to the *Jubilate*, rather than to the *Miserere*, and though he often spoke the words of the Miserere in all the depth of their pleading power, as he knelt in self-abasement, and cried, "Have mercy upon me, O God, wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sins," yet out of these penitential confessions of a broken and a contrite heart, he gathered the materials of joy and hope, which enabled him with Jubilate strains, to be joyful in the Lord, and to go unto His Gates with thanksgivings and into His Courts with praise. How many real children of God make religion repulsive by their religious sourness, or severity, or apparent sanctimoniousness! How much injury is done to the cause of Christ, when His disciples fail to illustrate in their lives the meekness and gentleness, the love and courtesy of their Divine Master. The honest and consistent piety of Judge Conyngham gave him great weight, even

among ungodly men, they said that he was a genuine man, that he was not a mock religionist, and they recognized and honored him for his Godly life.

His piety was robust and manly. It did not expend itself in frames and feelings, but in quiet, sober, effective action; demonstrating itself by his life rather than by his words, and impressing all beholders with a sense of its holy dignity and power. In private he relished conversation on religious topics, not merely upon speculative matters of theology, but of personal experience in the heart, and he spoke of these things so naturally, yet so modestly, that you saw at once that "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."

As a Churchman, he occupied a decided and well recognized position.

Among his ancestry and relatives were several distinguished Divines and Prelates of the Church of England and Ireland. His Grand-Father, Redmond Conyngham, was, a hundred and twenty-five years ago, connected with old Christ Church, Philadelphia, and his name appears in

a list of subscribers for building a steeple and providing bells, with Wm. Bingham and Benj. Franklin, and Edward Shippen, and Charles Meredith and Elias Boudinot and others, as those "who subscribed liberally to this object." Shortly after Redmond Conyngham was elected Vestryman and Warden of Christ Church, and in 1758, when it was resolved to build another Church in the southern part of the City, he was one of the Building Committee, and thus was one of the founders of St. Peter's Church, Third and Pine Streets, which was first opened for Divine Service, September 4th, 1761. He continued a member of the Vestry of the United Parishes of Christ Church and St. Peter's until his death.

The father of Judge Conyngham, David Hayfield Conyngham, was also connected with, and a liberal supporter of, Christ Church; and in that Parish the Judge was baptized and brought up as a child. On his removal to Wilkes-Barre he took an interest in the feeble Church of St. Stephen's, and in 1821 was elected a Vestryman, so that had he lived until last Easter,

he would have completed a half century of service as a Vestryman and Warden of this Parish. He first took his seat in the Diocesan Convention as a member of the Special Convention, held in St. Peter's, Philadelphia, in Oct. 1826, called by Bishop White, to take into consideration the expediency of electing an Assistant Bishop of the Diocese.

What an important part he has taken in Diocesan Church matters since then, you all know.

In 1850 he was nominated and elected by the Convention, a Deputy to the General Convention, and in company with his lay colleagues, Herman Cope, George M. Wharton and Judge Stroud, took his seat in that body in Cincinnati, in October of that year. With one exception, he was returned to the General Convention every session since.

As a Vestryman and Warden of St. Stephen's Church, he was indefatigable and punctual in the duties which devolved upon him, and was indeed the main supporting pillar of the corporation.

In the Diocesan Convention he was one of

its most efficient members. It was characteristic of him always to be in his place at the opening religious services of the Convention, and to give unremitted attention to the legislation until it adjourned. He was placed on many prominent Committees, and whenever he spoke the assembly gave him most respectful attention.

In the General Convention he also rose to a prominent position. This body, made up of picked men, four clergymen and four laymen from each Diocese, and meeting but once in three years, and legislating on matters involving the interests of the whole Church in the United States, is one of the noblest arenas for the display of forensic and ecclesiastical learning, and one of the most solemn and responsible positions which a Christian can hold. The known ability of Judge Conyngham early brought him into notice, and in 1862 he was placed on the most important of all Committees of the House of Clerical and Lay Deputies, viz.: the Committee on Canons, his lay colleagues on that Committee being Judge Chambers, of Maryland; Murray Hoffman, of New York; Robert

C. Winthrop, of Massachusetts. His influence in the lower house was a constantly increasing one. Always in his place—punctual to every appointment—never refusing work, and sacrificing all personal considerations to his duty as a Deputy, he gradually rose to be one of the controlling men of the Convention, and all respected his straight-forward and honourable course.

He gave much attention to Church affairs, and was a diligent student of God's word, hence his opinions were not the bias of any momentary influences, but the carefully formed views of one who had examined and weighed the subject matter before him.

Led by reason, then, rather than by passion, he was never a radical man. He did not hold extreme views, or counsel extreme action. Indeed, he strongly deprecated both. In his recoil from errors of doctrine, he was not willing to swing over towards errors of discipline. He was never willing to compromise by any entangling alliances, the policy or the ritual of his Church. Loving all who professed and called

themselves Christians, and delighting to mingle with them in Societies and Agencies, where no sacrifice of principle was required, he thought it wise and safe to refrain from those commingllings of services and pulpits, which so often lead to disorder and regret. He loved the Polity of the Church, because he believed that from the Apostles' time, there had been three orders of Ministers in Christ's Church. He loved the Liturgy of the Church, beause it was the best safeguard against errors and irregularities in public worship—the best guide for the public devotions of the congregations—the most ancient form of pure worship, and because its chaunts and hymns, and collects, and creeds, have been the media through which saints, and martyrs, and confessors, and millions upon millions of humble and holy men of heart, have breathed forth their prayers and praises to the triune God, for fifteen hundred years.

But, united to this strong attachment to the form of Episcopal Government, and to the ritual of the Episcopal Church, was a clear recognition of the Christian character, worth and services

of those who did not enjoy these special blessings, but who yet sought to do the Lord's work in sincerity and truth. He was not willing to say of such as the Apostle John did of a certain person in his day, "Master, we saw one casting out Devils in thy name, and he followeth not us, and we forbade him, because he followeth not us," for he remembered the rebuke of the Divine Master to that Apostle, "Forbid him not, for he that is not against us, is on our part." Still he felt that to the Church of his birth and of his love, was due the full force of all his powers of mind and body, and hence the sphere of his action was mostly within the limits of that ecclesiastical body.

The high estimation in which he was held by those with whose theological views he mostly sympathized, was shown in October, 1868, when he was elected President of the American Church Missionary Society.

This is the largest and most influential voluntary organization in the Protestant Episcopal Church. Having its central office in New York, it embraces in its officers and members,

Clergymen and Laymen from nearly every Diocese, and operates in a field co-extensive with the domestic missionary work of our Church.

Judge Conyngham fully held to the voluntary principle for the conducting of Domestic or Foreign Missions. He thought that there was more freedom of action—more elasticity—more unity of purpose—more liberality and heartiness in a society gathered on the basis of an elective affinity of theological and ecclesiastical needs, than in one necessarily fettered by the Legislative action of a great organic body, the General Church, which must always to a greater or less extent be an action of compromises. These opinions, which it does not become me at this present to advocate or controvert, he held in common with many learned and faithful men both among the Clergy and Laity; and the fact that ten of our Bishops were Honorary Vice-Presidents of the Society, showed how largely some of our noblest and wisest of Bishops shared in and sympathized with his opinions. Over this Society with its active press—its national work—its Church building, and children's branches—

its hundred and more Missionaries, he presided with dignity and force, commanding the respect and admiration of all its members. In this office, says the minute adopted by that Society in reference to his death prepared by the Rev. Dr. Tyng, the friend of forty years, "his presence has brought commanding dignity to the fulfilment of his duties, his eminent Christian character has added veneration and respect to his position, and his decided evangelical judgments and expressions have enhanced the confidence with which its operations have been regarded."

Such was Judge Conyngham in public—the large minded and law obeying citizen—the wise and upright Judge—the sincere and active Christian—the sound and devoted Churchman.

Could I, leaving the consideration of his public character, portray his domestic life, I should present you one of the loveliest home portraits which I have ever seen. How tender and thoughtful and constant, full of the unwearied courtesies of a loving heart, were his forty and seven years of wedded life! How marked his love of babes and children! and how

they early learned to cluster with delight about him, enjoying his outgushing mirth, and having their own young hearts kindled into a glow by the Father's petting or the Grand-Father's play!

How his house was ennobled with the freest and most generous hospitality, always teeming with visitors, and especially did he prove himself a Christian Gaius, as he entertained with liberal hand the hundreds of Clergymen who have partaken of his bounty or been housed beneath his roof. How much of the fragrance of a godly life, redolent of the graces of the Holy Ghost, was diffused over that home!

I shall not here detail the scene of his death, taken, too, by one of those sudden and mysterious providences before which we stand aghast with folded hands and bowed heads, and streaming eyes, and in the presence of which, we can only say with stricken hearts, It is the Lord, let Him do what seemeth him good. Though in a distant land, though surrounded by no family or home circle, yet loving and tender hearts were there—Jesus was there—the indwelling Spirit was there, and when God spoke to his soul and

said "Come up hither," angels, those ministering spirits sent forth to minister to them that are the heirs of salvation, bore his blood-washed soul to the Paradise of God.

For him how rapid the passage through the dark valley! In the morning travelling with a hopeful heart to meet a sick and beloved son, that he might bring him back to an earthly Father's house: and at night his own journey of life suddenly cut short, and himself borne upward to one of the many mansions of the Heavenly Father's House above. That death-scene will not, has not, been in vain. Its manifested patience and faith, and resignation and prayerfulness must tell on other hearts, while his dying words, "I know that my Redeemer liveth," have sounded all over the land as the shout of the victory in the last conflict, and as indicating the triumph which was to be his forever. Only a few days ago a faithful clergyman of this Diocese stated to me, that on visiting one of his parishioners, the gentleman said to him, calling him by name, although under your preaching you were gradually bringing me up to the

fence of decision, I have, nevertheless, been brought to my present determination to devote myself to Christ by an incident which I read in the newspaper during my sickness. I read there of a Judge who met with a fearful Railroad accident, and who died at a little station away down South, but whose last words were "I know that my Redeemer liveth;" as I read that sentence, continued the gentleman, I said to myself, if that is the joy and comfort which faith in Christ can bring to the soul of a man dying in such a manner, and in such a place, and away from home and family, then, by "God's help that Redeemer in whom he trusted shall be my Redeemer in life and death. You see, therefore, said he to his Minister, that it was the dying words of this gentleman, which not only brought me up to, but I trust over the fence of decision." God grant that this may not be the only fruit of this triumphant death.

And now what need I say more? Nothing surely in reference to him, but I could add much as illustrative of the fact, that all this beautiful character was the work of God's grace and that it should redound to God's glory.

No one more recognized this than himself, and to the workings of this grace of God in his heart can be traced all the higher and holier developments of his noble character.

It was this inner grace of the Holy Ghost which led him to recognize his body as the temple of God, and hence to keep it pure and undefiled, totally free from any thing like intemperance and pollution, so that at the age of three score and ten, he had the ruddy glow of health, the erect figure and carriage, and the elastic step of a man in middle life.

It was this grace of God, anointing with its sanctifying influences the faculties of his mind, that kept them from those disturbing passions and sins, which so often wreck the best intellects, or cripple their strength, by that reactionary power of sin, by which a man in old age is made so often to repossess the iniquities of his youth.

It was this grace of God, this abiding of his soul in Christ even as the branch abides in the vine, that gave to his Christian character that freshness and fruitage which so marked his daily

life and adorned his Christian profession. There are and have been many noble men, who have commanded the admiration of their fellow men, whose characters have been formed on merely human principles of truth and right, and in whose hearts there has been no distinctively Christian element. But the virtues which these have exhibited have been purely earthly ones, necessary for the comfort and elevation of society, or for personal prominence and regard.

Many of these excellencies and virtues are lovely and refining. Many of them are safeguards and towers of strength, keeping out evil influences, and conserving good ones. But as all moral virtue lies in the motive power of our actions, so, that whole system of morals which springs from purely personal or prudential motives, and is not originated by the exciting and guiding power of the Holy Ghost, is defective in its essential elements of greatness, viz.: a doing of all things to the Glory of God.

It is only the religion of Jesus Christ that displaces self as the governing principle of life, and enthrones the love of Christ as the con-

straining power of the soul. Until a man becomes a new creature in Christ Jesus, he does not, he cannot, act from any specific Christian motive; because the natural mind is enmity against God, and is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. But when the heart becomes the temple of the Holy Ghost, and when the one aim of life is to glorify God in body and spirit, then must there necessarily result a character, such as the world, with all its axioms of morality and philosophy, cannot produce.

The inner living, energizing force of the Christian, is the Holy Ghost. The outward object and end of all his aims and purposes, is to advance God's glory, and as character is the visible result of these invisible principles, and must necessarily partake of the greatness of its inner motive and its outward aim, so the true Christian, who lives up to the requirements of the Gospel, must develop a higher and nobler character than can possibly be produced by any combination of earthly forces. The world, indeed, neither sees nor recognizes these motives

and aims of the Christian, we are not to expect that it will. It did not see them in Jesus, it did not see them in his Apostles, and our Saviour distinctly says, because ye are not of the world, therefore, the world hateth you. But what the world ignores and even despises, God sees and approves, and by and by, when character shall be weighed and measured, not by human weights and standards, but in the balances and by the measuring rod of the Sanctuary, by God himself; then will the judgments of men be reversed, and humble, and holy men of heart, the sweet and lowly Christian, the watchful and self-distrustful disciple, the earnest and isngle-eyed follower of Jesus—the prayerful and faithful soldier of the Cross, men whose characters are emblazoned with no heraldic pomp, written in no scrolls of history, but found in the Lamb's book of life, then will these characters stand out, and loom up in their greatness, and their brightness, as the truest and noblest developments of human life, as those who, by their lives have caused men and angels to glorify God in them.

It is better to possess the humblest Christian character, fashioned by the Holy Ghost, and be patiently looking for and laboring for the coming of God's Kingdom, than to possess the most heroic or literary, or regal fame that can encircle the brow, or command the admiration of the world.

The fame that is earth-born, shall perish with the earth. That only is deathless fame, which is born of the Holy Ghost, and which shall flourish forever, in the Kingdom of Heaven.

And so we can say of Judge Conyngham. He being dead, yet speaketh. The influence of such a man can never die, for goodness is immortal, and when all earthly greatness shall fade and all worldly glory be dim, the spiritual good which he did by his faithful words, his liberal gifts, his godly life, and the beautiful pattern of a Christian, which he has left for all who knew him to copy and follow, will be still fresh and active, and be recognized at the last day, as the only greatness that is immortal, and the only glory that outlives the wreck of earth and time.

And now, who will rise up and take the place of Him whom death has removed?

Who shall go in and out before this community as he did, a living, walking epistle of Christ, known and read of all men?

Who shall occupy his vacant form in the Sunday-school, and prepare as diligently and conscientiously as he did, the Bible lesson which he was to teach his class?

Who shall fill his place in the Vestry of this Church, and be to this corporation its right arm of strength, and its wise counsellor and guide. Who shall represent him in the great congregation, in the punctuality of his attendance, in the devoutness of his worship, in the attention with which he listened to the sermon, in the reverent spirit which he ever manifested in the house of God?

Who shall go up, year by year, in his stead to the Diocesan Convention, or triennially to the greater gathering of the General Convention, and work as prudently and firmly as he did, and command the respect and reverence of the whole assembly? I appeal to you, who have known him as he went in and out before you, to

let not his life and example, be in vain, but rise up, and resting as he did, solely on the grace of God, determine, that so far as in you lies, you will, like him, glorify God by your daily walk and conversation.

There are many here whom God thus calls by his Providence and Word. Listen to that still small voice—heed the breathings of the Holy Ghost. Quench not the Spirit. But rouse up from your indifference—your indecision—your backslidings, your worldliness, and shake them all off, as Sampson broke the cord and green withes by which the Philistines thought to fetter him. Start up this day with new purpose of heart, to seek the Lord while he may be found, and to become a true Christian, so that your life, like the life of him whom we this day commemorate, may be a life of wide-spreading usefulness, your memory like his, be cherished with loving reverence—your end, as his was, be cheered and comforted by the support of Jesus' love, and your reward be like that which, we doubt not, through the abounding riches of redeeming grace, he received, a crown of glory which fadeth not away.